

# A GENEALOGY

OF THE

## STANSEL FAMILY

—BY—

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## The Stansel Family.

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About the middle of the 18th Century members of the Stansel family migrated from the old world, and located in the Southern Colony of South Carolina. They were Huguenots, but came from England. Branches lived in the Districts of Edgefield and Barnwell, particulars of which are unknown. Only one line is here traced.

I. William Stansel, the founder of the Pickens County family resided in Barnwell District, S. C., where he lived and died. He was a planter and slave owner; and also a minister of the gospel. In S. C. he married Miss Roberts, also of Huguenot origin, and the daut. of a revolutionary soldier.

### Children:

- 1 Louisa Stansel, m. —— Miles (remotely connected with Thomas J. Miles named below.) He died in S. C. or Ga.; and she removed to Pickens Co., where she resided with her brother, Rev. W. R. Stansel. She had one child, a daut., who married John W. Ward, and resided near Meridian, Miss. At his home Mrs. Miles died.
- 2 John, m. ——. Died at Tampa, Fla., prior to 1860, leaving descendants.
- 3 William Roberts, b. Sept. 15, 1792; m. Jane Riddle. (SEE NO. II BELOW).

II. William Roberts Stansel (son of William) was born in Barnwell District, S. C., Sept. 15, 1792. His early school advantages were limited, but by persistent effort and industry he obtained an excellent education. He always availed himself of every opportunity to acquire knowledge. Early uniting himself with the Baptist church, he later became an ordained minister of this denomination. In the War of 1812 he served with credit in a S. C. Regiment. During his early life, he engaged in mail and stage contracting in Ga. After the birth of five children he decided to remove to the then South-west. Reaching Pickens County in 1831, he was induced by Col. Robert Jemison, whom he had known in Ga., to locate. He selected a home in the vicinity of the "Garden," in an elegant and populous community; and here he continued to reside thirty years, an honored and useful citizen. He owned a considerable land and slave property; and his income was ample. Appreciating the importance of education he gave his sons and daughters the best academic and professional advantages. Shortly after his arrival he placed his membership with Enoch Church (near Garden), the second oldest Baptist congregation in the County. This church he served as pastor some years, as also other churches in Union Association. It is said of him by one who knew him well: "For a long time after he first came among us, he labored with abundant success, as a preacher of the 'Cross,' and had

many seals to his ministry. In the active service of his Lord, he spent the flower of his days, an instrument of much good."

On Aug. 2, 1821, in Washington County, Ga., he married Jane C. Hanesworth Riddle, who was b. June 20, 1802, in Chatham Co., N. C. She was the daut. of Capt. Cato Riddle (b. March 10, 1755, in Chatham Co., N. C.; d. in Washington Co., Ga., 1823) and his wife, Martha Tomlinson (b. 1770; d. 1840.) Capt. Riddle "served in the American army during the war of the Revolution, and was at the battles of Guilford and Cowpens; was not wounded or injured." Removing from Chatham Co., N. C., 1810, he located in Clarke Co., Ga., and two or three years later he removed to Washington Co. He and wife are buried in the church yard, near Sandersville, Ga. The parents of Capt. Riddle were Julius and Nancy (Mentor) Riddle, the former an emigrant from Scotland, or North Ireland, to Chatham Co. Descendants of this Riddle family have been influential in many communities; and some now reside in Greene County, Ala. Matilda Riddle, a sister of Mrs. Stansel, married Charles Fort, and with her husband came to this County, where they have descendants. (For an account of the Riddle and related families, consult G. T. Ridlon's HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT REYDALES, etc. 1884, 8 vo. pp. 786).

Mr. Stansel d. Sept. 6, 1860; and his wife d. of typhoid fever on Oct. 16, 1868. She was an amiable and noble character, and for fifty years a consistent member of the Baptist church. Both are buried at the "Garden" cemetery, where so many of the pioneer fathers and mothers of the County are sleeping the sleep that knows no earthly waking.

Their children were:

- 1 Martin Luther Stansel, b. April 23, 1822, in Washington Co., Ga. (SEE NO. III BELOW).
- 2 Martha A. M., b. Nov. 12, 1823, in Washington County, Ga.; m. Parks E. Ball; and d. Nov. 12, 1868; no issue. Both buried at the "Garden."
- 3 Richard Wickliffe, b. Oct. 27, 1825, in Washington Co., Ga.; merchant; d. unmarried at Starkeville, Miss., July 28, 1877.
- 4 John Calvin, b. Nov. 21, 1827, in Washington Co., Ga.; m. (1) March 3, 1852, Sarah Frances Gilmer, b. May 2, 1838, in Washington Co., Ga., removed with her husband to Pickens Co., Ala., Feb. 1855, and d. at Newport, Jan. 13, 1860; she is buried at the "Garden." He m. (2) Mary L. Little (sister of Maj. W. G. Little, jr., of Sumter Co.), who d. June, 1879, and is buried at Shady Grove, Sumter Co. No issue of either marriage. Mr. Stansel received a medical education, graduating at Memphis, Tenn. He removed to Vicksburg, Miss., and while on a business trip to La., d. at Monroe, Feb. 28, 1883.
- 5 Mary E. J., b. Nov. 4, 1829, in Washington Co., Ga.; m. (1) James H. Trantham; (2) William A. Hines. (SEE NO. IV BELOW).
- 6 Sarah L. G., b. April 28, 1832, in Pickens Co., Ala.; m. (1) March 10, 1858, Thomas J. Miles, in this Co.; farmer; he was a Lieut. of Engineers in the Civil War. About 1859 he d. at Memphis, Pickens Co., and later his wife moved to Tex., where she d. Children: i. William S.; ii. Thomas J.; and iii. Alva Miles.
- 7 Elenor Frances L. A., b. June 10, 1834; m. Dec. 14, 1854, William S. Newell, of Greene Co., Ala.; farmer. He lived in Meridian, and was in the Civil War in a Mississipi command. After the War he removed to Texas, and both he and wife now reside near Mexia. Children among others: i. Minnie, ii. Phoebe, and iii. William B. Newell.
- 8 William Eli-sha Battle, b. July 7, 1837; m. Mary L., daut. of Dr. Jesse Cravens who was b. in Ky. Nov. 28, 1795 and d. Oct. 28, 1879, at Bremond, Robinson Co., Tex.; a farmer; after some years in Texas and Ark., he now resides at the "Garden," Pickens Co. Only one child: Jesse Stansel who is married, and lives in Colorado.

9 Alva Horace, b. Aug. 23, 1840; he was a member of the Pickensville Blues in the Civil War, and was killed at the battle of Seven Pines.  
 10 Octavia L. Hanesworth, b. April 4, 1846; m. Robert N. Morrow; and d. without children, April 7, 1887. She is buried at the "Garden."

III. Martin Luther Stansel (son of Rev. William R.) was b. in Washington Co., Ga., April 23, 1822. While but a youth his father removed to Pickens Co. Here he received a thorough rudimentary education and in 1840 entered the University of Alabama. He acquitted himself with distinction, and in Dec., 1843, was graduated. His classmates were Rev. H. E. Brooks, Rev. C. E. Crenshaw, F. W. Crenshaw, Samuel B. Jones, Esq., Dr. Basil Manly, jr., A. W. Richardson, Dr. Warfield C. Richardson, and Maj. Felix Tait. In 1844 he began and prosecuted vigorously the study of the law under Judge Peter Martin, and was admitted to the practice before the State Supreme Court, at Tuscaloosa, in Dec. 1845. He at once located in Carrollton, where he has continuously practiced his profession, except the four years of his war service. In 1849 he was elected Judge of the County Court by the Legislature. The Probate Court system being adopted in this year, he was defeated for the office of Judge in May, 1850, by Tristam Shandy Thomas. In 1861 he was elected to the Legislature, and served during an exciting and important session.

He was not content, however, to serve his people in a civil capacity only, and when the 41st Alabama Regiment of Infantry was organized in April, 1862, he became its major. This splendid body of men was raised in Tuscaloosa, Greene and Pickens. The following will be remembered as commanding companies from the last named county: Messrs. J. C. Kirkland, J. G. Nash, Robert H. McCord, Thomas S. Abernathy, and James N. Craddock. In this Regiment was also Capt. L. D. Hudgins, (father of the present Probate Judge of Pickens), who lost his life for his country at Petersburg. The 41st Ala., had on its rolls 1454 names, of which about 130 were killed, about 370 died of disease, and 135 were transferred or discharged.

Brewer's ALABAMA thus summarizes his military career: "He soon rose to the colonelcy, sharing the toils of the command, and its dangers at Murfreesboro, Jackson (Miss.), Chickamauga, Drewry's Bluff, and in front of Richmond and Petersburg in the closing months of the great struggle. At Murfreesboro he was wounded. Gen. Moody being ill, Col. Stansel commanded the brigade—41st, 43d, 59th and 60th Alabama regiments [and 23d Ala. Battalion]—in the battle of White Oak Roads, and in the engagements on the retreat to Appomattox, where he surrendered it."

Returning home, the county honored him with a seat in the Constitutional Convention of 1865, a body of earnest and remarkable men. In the same year he was elected to the State Senate, serving until 1858. For twenty years he pursued his professional labors, uninterrupted by political aspirations or desires. In 1888 he was, however, again called upon to represent the County in the Lower House; and in 1890 he was chosen to the Senate for four years. In the Senate he was Chairman of the judiciary committee. Again elected to the lower house in 1896, at this session he filled the very important post of Chairman of the joint committee of both Houses on the Code.

Col. Stansel has always been the friend of every educational movement. He was a trustee of the University of Ala., 1856-62, and 1892.

1860, and of the Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1872-92. Locally he has been the patron and friend of the common schools, and has on several occasions delivered educational addresses. On July 14, 1857 he appeared as the orator before the Alumni Society of the University of Ala., his theme being "The Position, Resources, and Duties of Alabama considered in connection with the literature and learning of the South;" and again, June 23, 1884, he appeared before the same body in an address on "The University and the higher learning."

He was one of the corresponding editors of the Southern Law Journal, 1878-79, conducted by A. B. McEachin, Esq., of Tuscaloosa. To this he contributed well considered papers on The Code of 1876 and the Common Law; Evidence—Compensation of Experts; Ad Quod Damnum; and Champerty.

Col. Stansel has always maintained the principles and practices of the Democratic Party. He was a delegate to and attended the Democratic National Conventions of 1856, and 1876. From 1868 to 1874, he was Chairman of the Executive Committee of Pickens County, and did much to redeem the latter from the bondage of Radical misrule and corruption.

As a tribute to his prominent position as an attorney, the Alabama State Bar Association chose him as its President, 1882-3, and his official address at the meeting of Aug. 1, 1883, will be found in the Proceedings of that year.

The following excellent character sketch and estimate is from the pen of Hon. A. W. Dillard, for twelve years Chancellor, and before whom Col. Stansel often appeared. He says:

"Judge Stansel is independent in thought, upright in conduct and manly in character; and what is vastly to his credit, his entire influence is steadily and fearlessly exerted in favor of morality, good order and obedience to law. He not only himself abstains from what is immoral and lawless, but he labors to instill into those with whom he is brought into contact, the same regard for morality, good order and obedience to law. This line of conduct renders him a good and useful citizen, and leaves him to pass the evening of his days free from remorse.

"Judge Stansel is firm in his political creed, and by no means a trimmer, yet he is in a great degree free from political rancor and bigotry, and knows how to combine devotion to his own creed with a large share of charity of opinion and kindness of heart.

"As a speaker, Judge Stansel is forcible, argumentative and brief —rarely indulging in long speeches. His manners are polite and polished, but are marked by an air of reserve; his habits are strictly moral and temperate, and he is steady in his friendships. As a lawyer, he is high-toned, and above all pettifogging tricks or 'sharp practice.' In 1857 he delivered a literary address before the Alumni of the University, which was highly praised by the press for its terse diction and scholarly finish. My recollection of this address, which was carefully read by me, at the time, leads me to concur in the praises bestowed upon it. It is much to be lamented, that a gentleman so well educated, and so correct in his taste in literary matters, as Judge Stansel, should not consecrate some small portion of his time to composition, either upon legal or literary subjects."

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Col. Stansel, although at the advanced age of 78 years, retains excellent health, is as prompt and punctual in attendance upon business, and as earnest a student, as at any time in the past. He maintains the view that the duty of a lawyer is loyalty to his profession, and strict attention to business. He occupies the law office which he had erected fifty-two years ago. Lucien Julien Walker thus beautifully speaks of him in a late number of the Age-Herald: "Colonel Stansel is the highest type of southern citizenship. He is proud, brave, generous and faithful in all his appointed ways. With his long, flowing white beard, he looks the patriarch—a father of his people. His gentle courtesy and unpretending civility are worthy of an age that is done. In the essentials of a strong manhood few equal him; none surpass."

Col. Stansel has been twice married: (1) to Laura Sherrod, Jan. 18, 1849. She was b. May 23, 1833; d. Aug. 31, 1851, and is buried at Carrollton. (2) To Olivia Sherrod, May 13, 1858, who is still living. These are both dauts. of James Bayard Sherrod and his wife, Caroline White, early settlers in the County.

The Whites were also early settlers, and to this family belonged the mother of Gen. F. W. Bostick.

His children are, by the 1st wife:

1 James Bayard Stansel; graduate of the University of Alabama, class of 1872; is a lawyer and resides at Carrollton; m. Emma Mustin, daut. of William G. and Mary (Wilson) Mustin. One child, a daut., Laura.

By the 2nd wife:

2 Mary Ella, m. (1) Philip P. Pearson, b. Sept. 28, 1848, d. March 24, 1891, and buried at Carrollton; (2) Dr. D. S. Brockway. They reside at Livingston, Ala.

3 Olive Lou, m. James Kerr McCants.

IV. Mary E. J. Stansel (daut. of Rev. William R.) was b. Nov. 4, 1829, in Washington Co., Ga. Removing with her parents to Pickens Co., she was m. Oct. 19, 1848, to James H. Trantham, (son of George and Elizabeth Trantham, early settlers in the lower section of this Co.) who was b. March 26, 1829, in Pickens Co., and d. Feb. 7, 1860, of typhoid fever. He was an upright, manly and highly respected citizen, and died lamented by friends and relatives. After his death she m. (2) William A. Hines, of Pickens Co., who survives her. She is buried at the "Garden."

Children by 1st husband, Mr. Trantham:

1 George Trantham, d. young.

2 Julia E., b. May 22, 1852; m. April 10, 1896, J. Tyler Hamster, and resides near Carrollton.

3 Infant son, d. young.

4 Viola S., b. Dec. 23, 1854; m. Sept. 14, 1876, George Foster Jennings, son of Thomas K. and Angeline (Gilbert) Jennings. Mrs. Jennings was a sister of L. E. Gilbert, so long connected with the WEST ALABAMIAN. Mr. and Mrs. George Jennings have a number of children, and reside at Carrollton.

5 James M., b. March 27, 1857; m. Minnie Partan.

6 Richard B., b. Sept. 16, 1859; m. Cora White.

By 2nd husband, Mr. Hines:

7 William Hines, d. young.

8 Mary d. young.

9 Mattie W., b. June 23, 1865, unm.

10 Id., b. Dec. 9, 1868; m. Jan. 6, 1886, H. B. Chappell, jr. She is dead.

11 Id., b. Dec. 9, 1868 (twin with the preceding); m. Dec. 8, 1898, Wm. Turnipseed.